

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSC-01 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 /063 W
-----020170 311053Z /12

R 311023Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7605
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY MANILA
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 03405

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TW
SUBJECT: APPOINTMENT OF NEW CABINET

REF: TAIPEI 03293

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT CHIANG CHING-KUO ON MAY 29 APPOINTED 20 MEMBERS OF HIS NEW CABINET AND DESIGNATED THE NEW TAIWAN PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR AND MAYOR OF TAIPEI. THE CABINET, WHICH WAS SWORN IN MAY 30 AND ASSUMES OFFICE JUNE 1, WAS FORMED LARGELY BY RESHUFFLING EXISTING CABINET MEMBERS. IT CONTAINS ONE FEWER TAIWANESE MEMBER. ONLY ONE OLD MEMBER, YEH KUNG-CH'AO (74) (FORMERLY MINISTER-WITHOUT-PORTFOLIO) WAS DECISIVELY REMOVED FROM THE SCENE TO THE HONORARY POSITION OF SENIOR POLICY ADVISORY. THERE ARE ONLY A FEW "NEW" FACES IN THE CABINET, AND EVEN THESE COME FROM THE RANKS OF PREVIOUS CABINET MEMBERS (SUCH AS NEW FINANCE MINISTER CHANG CHI-CHENG) OR IN TWO CASES, FROM THE VICE MINISTERIAL RANKS. TAIWANESE APPOINTEES GOVERNOR LIN YANG-KANG AND TAIPEI MAYOR LI TENG-HUI WERE ANNOUNCED MAY 29 ALONG WITH MILITARY AND NON-CABINET APPOINTMENTS. THE CABINET AND
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OTHER APPOINTMENTS REPRESENT A CONSERVATIVE APPROACH BY PRESIDENT CHIANG, FAIL TO INDICATE A SUCCESSOR AND STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUITY AND STABILITY BASED ON ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS. END SUMMARY

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED.

1. THE FOLLOWING CABINET OFFICIALS WERE RETAINED IN

THEIR PREVIOUS POSITIONS:

(TAIWANESE ARE INDICATED BY A "T" FOLLOWING THEIR NAME)

VICE PREMIER HSU CH'ING-CHUNG(T)(72)

COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER LIN CHIN-SHENG(T)(62)

FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER SHEN CH'ANG-HUAN(65)

NATIONAL DEFENSE MINISTER GENERAL KAO (UEI-YUAN(70)

MINISTERS-WITHOUT-PORTFOLIO LI KUO-TING (65)

- YU KUO-HUA (64)

- CH'EN CH'I-LU(T)(55)

2. NEW CABINET APPOINTMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS MINISTER CHANG KUANG-SHIH, FORMER

- VICE MINISTER OF ECONO-

- MIC AFFAIRS (65)

EDUCATION MINISTER CHU HUI-SEN, FORMER VICE

- MINISTER OF EDUCATION (67)

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FINANCE MINISTER CHANG CHI-CHENG, FORMER

- SECRETARY GENERAL OF

- THE EXECUTIVE YUAN AND

- A PREVIOUS MINISTER OF

- COMMUNICATIONS (61)

INTERIOR MINISTER CH'IU CH'UANG-HUAN (T),

- FORMER MINISTER-WITHOUT-

- PORTFOLIO REPLACING

- CHANGE FENG-HSU WHO LOST

- HIS PORTFOLIO BUT

- RETAINED MINISTERIAL

- RANK (53)

JUSTICE MINISTER LI YUAN-T'SU, FORMER

- MINISTER OF EDUCATION(55)

NEW MINISTERS-WITHOUT-TER

PORTFOLIOS FEI HUA, FORMER MINISTER

- OF FINANCE (66)

- CHANG FENG-HSU (T),

- FORMER MINISTER OF

- INTERIOR (50)
- CHOU HUNG-T'AO,
- FORMER EXECUTIVE YUAN
- DIRECTOR GENERAL OF
- BUDGET, ACCOUNTS AND
- STATISTICS (62)

3. THE NEW GOVERNOR OF TAIWAN WILL BE FORMER TAIPEI MAYOR LIN YANG-KANG (T) (51) AND THE NEW MAYOR OF TAIPEI LI TENG-HUI (T) (55) (SEE REFTEL A). THEY WILL BE FORMALLY ANNOUNCED FOLLOWING THEIR APPROVAL BY THE CABINET AT ITS FIRST MEETING ON JUNE 1, AND ARE EXPECTED TO TAKE OFFICE BY JUNE 12.

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4. NEW NON-CABINET APPOINTEES INCLUDE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE EXECUTIVE YUAN MA CHI-CHUANG (66) (FORMER CHINA STEEL CORPORATION BOARD CHAIRMAN, AMBASSADOR TO THAILAND AND DEPUTY MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE); EXECUTIVE YUAN DIRECTOR GENERAL OF BUDGETS, ACCOUNTS AND STATISTICS CHUNG SHIH-I (64) (FORMER TAIWAN PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 TAIPEI 03405

COMMISSIONER OF FINANCE.) NON-CABINET MEMBER OFFICIALS

WHO WERE RETAINED INCLUDE VOCATION ASSISTANCE FOR RETIRED SERVICEMEN (VACRS) CHAIRMAN CHAO CHU-YU (63), MONGOLIAN AND TIBETAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION CHAIRMAN CH'U TS'UI-YEN (71) AND OVERSEAS CHINESE AFFAIRS COMMISSION CHAIRMAN MAO SUNG-NIEN (67).

5. IN A MILITARY RESHUFFLE GENERAL CHENG WEI-YUAN (65) BECAME DEPUTY MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE, GENERAL MA AN-LAN (62) BECAME SENIOR VICE CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF, GENERAL HAO PO TS'UN (59) WAS NAMED ARMY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AND GENERAL WANG CHING-HSU (59) BECAME TAIWAN GARRISON COMMAND CINC. THEY WERE ALSO SWORN IN ON MAY 30. END UNCLASSIFIED.

BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL.

6. COMMENT: THE NEW CABINET IS STABLE AND CONSERVATIVE. WITH THE DECISION TO RETAIN MOST EXISTING FACES, AND CHANGE REPRESENTED PRIMARILY BY RESHUFFLING KNOWN FIGURES, PRESIDENT CHIANG HAS OPTED FOR AN IMAGE OF CONTINUITY, STABILITY AND EFFICIENCY OF ADMINISTRATION
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RATHER THAN CHANGE. ALTHOUGH THIS WILL BE WELCOMED BY A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THE MAINLAND POPULATION, THE APPOINTMENTS WILL DISAPPOINT THOSE WHO HOPED TO SEE IN THEM EVIDENCE OF POLITICAL CHANGE.

7. THE FAILURE TO INTRODUCE ANY NEW POLITICAL BLOOD MAY ALSO INCREASE CONCERN AMONG SOME SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION THAT CCK IS UNWILLING TO LIBERALIZE THE KMT, NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURES. CCK'S CABINET CHOICES MAY ALSO RAISE QUESTIONS LOCALLY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF GROWING RIGIDITY ONCE THE NEW GOVERNMENT IS IN PLACE. IT IS TOO SOON TO TELL WHETHER CCK MIGHT EVENTUALLY UTILIZE THIS NEW CABINET TO AFFECT CHANGES, BUT AT PRESENT ALL SIGNS POINT TO A HOLDING ACTION AND CONSERVATIVE POSTURE.

8. THE NEW CABINET IS CHARACTERIZED BY ITS ECONOMIC EXPERTISE AND RELATIVE SENIORITY (AVERAGE AGE 63) OF ITS MEMBERS. PRESIDENT CHIANG APPEARS TO HAVE PLACED CONSIDERABLE EMPHASIS ON ECONOMICS, PRESUMABLY IN THE HOPE THAT ECONOMIC STABILITY WILL CONTINUE TO BE THE BASIS FOR POLITICAL STABILITY ON TAIWAN.

9. IN THE PROCESS OF PUTTING TOGETHER THE NEW CABINET, CCK ONCE AGAIN HAS DEMONSTRATED HIS AUTHORITARIAN AND CLOSE-TO-THE-CHEST MANAGEMENT STYLE. PRIOR TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CABINET, SEVERAL REPORTEDLY AUTHENTIC

LISTS WERE CIRCULATED (UNOFFICIALLY) BY OFFICIALS WHO BELIEVED THEY WERE PRIVY TO CCK'S DECISIONS AND NEWS-PAPERS WHO ALSO FELT THEY HAD AN INSIDE LINE. CCK, AS USUAL, ALLOWED PEOPLE TO DRAW THEIR OWN CONCLUSIONS AND DID NOT CONTRADICT ANY PUBLIC SPECULATION, BUT IN THE END PROCEEDED TO ACT IN HIS OWN SECRETIVE MANNER. THE
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PROCESS SUCCEEDED (AS IT HAS FOR HIM PREVIOUSLY) IN KEEPING EVERYONE OFF GUARD AND PREVENTING ANY SINGLE FIGURE FROM DEMONSTRATING AN INDEPENDENT POLITICAL STANCE.

10. WE WILL REPORT REACTIONS TO NEW CABINET APPOINTEES AS THEY ARE RECEIVED. BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON SELECTED NEW CABINET MEMBERS FOLLOWS SEPTEL. END CONFIDENTIAL.
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